

"Federation Corner" column  
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### **Three activists honored at May 9 Civic Federation banquet**

by Peggy Dennis  
MCCF Immediate Past President

The 2014 Montgomery County Civic Federation Banquet on May 9 was the 90th awards celebration held by the all volunteer countywide organization. Started in 1925, MCCF has a simple mission to preserve and enhance the quality of life for residents of the county. The group pauses annually and bestows three awards to honor outstanding volunteers and their work. The recent dinner at New Fortune Restaurant in Gaithersburg was attended by county officials and delegation to the State General Assembly, as well as activists, their family and friends.

**The Wayne Goldstein Award** is given to an individual or group for outstanding service to the people of Montgomery County. This year the award went to Danila Sheveiko, in recognition of his work and civic leadership on behalf of public interest land use planning, water quality, forest conservation and community quality of life.

Until a mega gas station owned by Costco was proposed to be built on the Wheaton Plaza parking lot 118 feet from his residence, Danila Sheveiko led a quiet life in Kensington Heights. A small internet technology business operator, Danila was largely unaware of the civic battles raging around the county. Instead he had been content with donating thousands of hours of volunteer and pro bono services to local humanitarian organizations like Shepherd's Table, CASA of Maryland, and Habitat for Humanity.

Thrust into a high-profile local development fight, Mr. Sheveiko got a civic education the hard way. He helped form the Costco Working Group, and went on to serve as president of his neighborhood organization, the Kensington Heights Civic Association. In addition to his four years of work on the Costco case, which has yet to be decided, Danila built a coalition of nearly a dozen organizations that worked to improve the Wheaton Sector Plan. He continues to watchdog redevelopment projects proposed for Wheaton, like the new Park and Planning headquarters building.

Nominated by County Executive Leggett to the Water Quality Advisory Group, he served for three years with dedication and distinction, not missing a single meeting. He chaired the Advisory Group's Development/ Environmental Site Design Subcommittee, working to publicize the economic benefits of urban greening, and eventually co-chaired the entire group. He has also been a leading advocate for State-level protection of Ten Mile Creek in the Clarksburg area.

The MCCF hopes that giving this award to a leader like Mr. Sheveiko will help encourage younger activists to lead civic groups and initiatives. Young civic leaders like Danila renew our confidence in the future of our county.

**The Sentinel Award** is sponsored by the Montgomery Sentinel newspaper and awarded to an individual or group for a significant contribution to good government at the local level. The recipient of this year's Sentinel Award is Lyda Astrove, who has been a tireless worker and supporter of public education in the county, specifically the education of Special Needs children.

Lyda is a special education attorney and advocate with a focus on improving the county's responses to Special Needs children in our community. She received her B.A. from Vanderbilt University, In Nashville, Tennessee, and her J.D. from Stetson University College of Law in St.

Petersburg, Florida. For over 15 years, she has helped families in our county navigate the complexities of government in order to obtain appropriate educational services for their children with disabilities, working with Child Welfare Services and the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

Ms. Astrove is a past member of the Board of Directors of the Montgomery County chapter, Autism Society of America and Co-Chair of the Montgomery County Workgroup on the Future for People with Severe Developmental Disabilities, including Autism. Her other awards include Local Autism Hero, Cure Autism Now & Autism Speaks; and Outstanding Parent, MCCPTA Special Needs Committee. Last year she received the Civic Federation's Community Hero Award for her work in the community.

Lyda has fought tirelessly for better conditions and education for the special needs community in Montgomery County. Most recently she has taken on the issue of a problem at Rock Terrace School where it was discovered that the money special needs students had received in exchange for work done was placed in bank accounts that were opened and maintained without their parents' knowledge. Working with the parents of these children, Lyda pushed so that a Grand Jury investigation was opened and there is an inquiry into exactly what happened to these children and the funds they earned.

She is a constant and tireless advocate for improvements in services and education for special needs children and adults. The MCCF is proud to bestow the 2014 Sentinel Award on Lyda Astrove.

**The Star Cup**, sponsored by the Montgomery County Civic Federation, is awarded to a delegate or committee of the Federation for outstanding public service on behalf of Montgomery County. The 2014 Star Cup was presented to Carole Ann Barth, who is currently serving her second and final term as President of the Civic Federation.

Carole Ann is Immediate Past President of the Northwood Four Corners Civic Association where she still plays a very active role. She has been heavily involved in her community's annual Meadow Festival and their fight to preserve the Rachel Carson Meadow, which regrettably was bulldozed under in a redesign of North Four Corners Local Park by the county Parks Department.

In the Civic Federation Carole has served for five years as Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee, and will complete her second term as MCCF President in June. She has carried out her duties for the Federation with tact, grace and equanimity in the face of sometimes irascible or openly hostile personalities. For her sustained and tireless efforts on behalf of the Civic Federation and the county, the MCCF is pleased to award Carole Ann Barth the 2014 Star Cup.

*The views expressed in this column do not necessarily reflect formal positions adopted by the Federation. To submit an 800-1000 word column for consideration, send as an email attachment to [montgomerycivic@yahoo.com](mailto:montgomerycivic@yahoo.com)*